

## EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with attorney Michael K. Jones on 9/15/2010. *The application has been amended as follows:*

### ***Amendments to the Specification***

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 7, line 28 and ending on page 8, line 7 with the following replacement paragraph:

-- Towing member 20 is a flexible element disposed within opening 34. Opening 34 is an enclosed space that retains towing member 20, so that the towing member cannot slip out of the opening while the hitch assembly 10 is being used. The inside surface 36 of a curved portion forming a closed end 38 of clevis 16 may be ground and rounded to lessen the probability that towing member 20 will be damaged by abrasion from clevis 16. Towing members 20 may be made of any of a number of materials including synthetic and natural polymeric materials and metal. Towing members typically include ropes, chains, cables and towing belts, with towing belts (straps) being preferred. The hitch assembly 10 is particularly suited for use with a towing belt or other broad towing member, especially when an aluminum

clevis 16 is being used, as a towing belt distributes the applied force over a larger area than would a cable or chain. --

***Amendments to the Claims***

**Claim 1 is amended as follows:**

(Line 4): -- the first end, and a second aperture sized to engage a hitch pin at the second end, the --

(Line 6): -- a U-shaped clevis with a first clevis end and a second clevis end, a curved portion of the U-shaped --

**Claim 3 is amended as follows:**

(Line 3): -- [[the]] areas where the hitch pin is inserted. --

**Claim 4 is amended as follows:**

(Line 2): -- having a curved surface disposed in a closed end formed by the curved portion of the U-shaped clevis. --

**Claim 22 is amended as follows:**

(Line 11): -- a curved portion [[end]] connecting the first clevis leg and the second clevis leg; --

(Lines 12-13): -- the curved portion of the U-shaped clevis being significantly wider than it is thick, such that it is flat in cross-section; --

(Line 15): -- wherein the open end of the U-shaped clevis is sized to receive the second end of the coupling --

### ***Conclusion***

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to MARC A. SCHARICH whose telephone number is (571) 272-3244. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8:30 a.m. - 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Lesley Morris can be reached on (571) 272-6651. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the

Art Unit: 3611

Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

M.A.S. – 9/15/2010

/Marc A Scharich/  
Patent Examiner  
Art Unit 3611

/LESLEY D MORRIS/  
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 3611